



# Lamoine Board of Selectmen

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## Minutes of September 18, 2008

Chair Jo Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM

Present were: Selectmen Brett Jones, Richard Fennelly Jr., Chris Tadema-Wielandt, S. Josephine Cooper; Administrative Assistant Stu Marckoon, Budget Committee members Reginald McDevitt, Henry Ashmore, Hubene Brodie, Robin Veysey, Deputy CEO Michael Jordan, Veterans Memorial Committee Secretary Kathleen DeFusco, Steve Salsbury and Attorney Michael Ross

Excused Absence: Selectman Cynthia Donaldson (attending daughter's wedding!)

The meeting was televised and recorded by Lamoine CTV Channel 7.

**Agenda Review** – Stu reported he had one matter come in this afternoon requesting an underground permit on Berry Cove Road.

**Minutes of September 4, 2008** – Stu reported he'd received two minor changes from Chris. Richard said he had one minor change. Jo moved to approved with the corrections. Richard 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**Expenditure Warrant 6** – Selectmen signed Warrant 6 for \$656,490.70. Stu reported that the bulk of that was \$305,000 for the school construction warrant, \$177,000 for the school operations warrant and \$114,000 for paving. He said he moved \$60,000 from investments into the checking account to cover the checks.

**Cash & Budget Report** – Stu reported the cash expected amount for June 30, 2008 will be overstated by the amount of the school construction warrant as the money has come in from the Bond Bank but won't go out until the warrant is booked. There were no further questions

**Checking Account Reconciliation as of August 31, 2008** – Selectmen signed the statement expressing satisfaction with the checking account reconciliation.

**Excise Tax Refund Request** – Chris asked if the yellow copy of the excise tax receipt had been received back from the requestor. Stu reported it had not. Chris moved to table the matter until the Board receives more information. Richard 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**Gott Right of Way** – Steve Salsbury submitted maps of the overall site to the Board. He said he'd highlighted the historical deeded access and the presently used access. Attorney Michael Ross said he was representing Tim Gott, and that Mr. Gott is willing to give up the deeded access even without permanent easements over the Smith pit.

Brett said that was good news. Jo said the Board was seeking something definite. Brett asked if the areas that were highlighted in yellow represented where the proposed easements lay, and if there would be any change in the future. Mr. Salsbury said there

would be no reason to move those travel paths. He said the areas around those have been restored.

Jo asked if there was anything drawn up yet. Attorney Ross said he was here to answer any questions. Richard said it looked fairly straightforward. Stu asked if this was essentially the original proposal from the Board to Gott. Jo said it was. Chris suggested the Board approve it. Jo asked when it could be ready. Mr. Salsbury said he could have it ready this time next month. Attorney Ross asked who he should deal with. Jo said to send the material to Stu, and Chris has been reviewing it. Stu reminded the Board that Chris would be done after the next meeting. Chris said he would be willing to review the document subsequent to his departure.

**Meeting with Budget Committee** – Jo said the purpose for meeting with the Budget Committee was to discuss budget issues for the coming year. She said perhaps the first issue might be to determine when the Town Meeting date should be.

Henry Ashmore said the Committee is looking only at the town budget next year. He asked when the town meeting date would be.

Richard asked whether the State figures would be ready sooner under the Regional School Unit (RSU) configuration. Jo suggested that the board just set a date. Brett asked if there is still a town meeting and referendum process for the school budget. Dr. Ashmore said the RSU holds the open meeting, and then each town in the RSU holds a validation referendum based on the budget set at the open meeting. A discussion followed on the RSU meeting and validation referendum process.

Dr. Ashmore reported that the RSU plan has been finalized by the Regional Planning Committee (RPC). He said an informational meeting would be held in Lamoine sometime prior to the vote planned for December 9, 2008. Discussion followed regarding a quorum for the budget meeting, whether each town must be represented at the budget meeting, the validation referendum, the RSU budget meeting, and the implications of the consolidation vote if it's rejected, including the penalties that would be assessed directly and experienced indirectly. Dr. Ashmore provided a detailed explanation of the consequences of rejection, including having to hire a superintendent and buying the state's education software package.

Dr. Ashmore said the way the proposed RSU is structured, Lamoine's school renovation debt service would be spread out across the RSU, and there would be more state subsidy for the RSU towns to share. He said the cost sharing formula was devised to avoid shifting costs. He explained that the planning committee aggregated the total by which Essential Programs and Services (EPS) is exceeded, and then took the amount by which each town exceeded EPS, and divided that into the total. He said Lamoine came out at about 7-percent of the total, so that would carry forward into the budget. A lengthy discussion followed.

Hubene Brodie asked whether the town or the RSU would be expected to pick up the costs of Special Education. Dr. Ashmore said the RSU would provide the funding.

Richard asked how the formula was devised. Dr. Ashmore said it was baselined on this year's budget. He said the formula would be in effect for 4-to-5 years and then must be reviewed. He said things could change over time, and schools could end up closing. Richard said the formula sounds similar to the LD 1 concept. A short discussion followed.

Dr. Ashmore said the district budget meeting would decide if and how much the RSU budget would exceed EPS. Richard said once an RSU is established, the budget and voting process would be exactly what the town has been going through during the summer.

Mrs. Brodie asked when the amount will come out to know how much the town is going to pay the RSU. She said that would be a nice figure to know when town meeting is held. A lengthy discussion followed in regard to timing. Dr. Ashmore said each school board could appoint an interim board member in January to get things going. He said the question remains as to who will manage the interim RSU Board.

Jo said it would be helpful to have a good picture of the school consolidation process. Dr. Ashmore said the RPC approved the plan last night. He said that would be sent to the school boards to authorize their superintendents to submit the plan to the Commissioner of Education for submission to the State Board of Education for final approval. The issue would then come back for votes in the many towns making up the RSU.

Brett said there is already a fair amount of mis-information going around. Dr. Ashmore said the RPC/RSU needs to get the facts out and emphasize the negative side of choosing not to join the RSU.

Municipal Budget – Jo asked Dr. Ashmore for his opinion on when the town meeting ought to be held. Dr. Ashmore said to set it when the Selectmen see fit. Brett asked what impact the municipal budget had on the property tax rate for this year. Stu said it was miniscule, less than 1-percent.

Jo said paving and plowing will be a little different in the coming year. She said she thought that would be an impact on the budget. A discussion followed on projections for the economy. Robin Veysey suggested a contingency line to cover unexpected fluctuations. Brett reported the Selectmen had spoken with Nankervis to consider a possible change in the payment structure. He said the price of diesel is an issue. Richard suggested perhaps an increase in the undesignated fund balance might be necessary. Jo said the impact of the RSU should be kept in mind. Brett said some stability would be nice.

Dr. Ashmore said he looked at the list of projects discussed during the budget cycle last year. He asked about:

- Reconfiguration of the Town Hall (funded this year, and just beginning)
- Parking at Town Hall (not discussed or funded yet)

- Anderson Garage (included in funding for this year and under way)
- Bloomfield Park Road (included in funding for this year)
- Vault (a brief discussion followed on what the storage needs are)
- Fire Department – Stu reported they're looking at a forestry truck
- Air Packs – The fire department purchased those in the past fiscal year from privately raised funds.
- Turnout Gear – Michael Jordan said that by law, the gear now needs to be replaced every 10-years.
- Roads – this is considered a major issue without a contingency fund. Paving this year was out of site compared to what was budgeted. There was a discussion about the cost of liquid asphalt

Dr. Ashmore asked about the LD 1 limit and whether it would only be a few thousand dollars because of the actual increase for the municipal budget. Stu reported the limit was increased by the town meeting in April and even though some items were cut in July, there was no action to decrease the LD 1 limit. Richard said he would like to check with MMA to be certain that is correct.

Dr. Ashmore asked what level of tax increase the Selectmen would be comfortable with. Richard said he would think the upper end would be half of what this year's increase was. Brett said the Budget Committee should give an honest assessment on the needs of the town, and what's needed to do the job. Jo asked if there were increases inevitable because of shifting to an RSU. Dr. Ashmore said yes, but the rate of increase is likely to decrease over the years. Richard said he would like to see a lower rate. He noted that two 30-percent increases work out to a 69-percent increase due to compounding. Dr. Ashmore said the amount of tax increase speaks to the amount of contingency.

Jo noted that other towns are addressing elderly and heating issues and suggested that there ought to be some small fund to draw on for that. She said the town wouldn't have to manage the funds, and explained the THAW fund through the Washington/Hancock Community Agency (WHCA). Brett asked if this would be separate from General Assistance. Jo said it would be separate. Richard said some program to help would be good, and asked if it would be in lieu of General Assistance or in addition to. A brief discussion followed.

Richard asked who would manage the program. Jo said it would be WHCA. She said other towns are collecting money to put into the THAW fund. Richard said he would rather run the program in-house similar to the General Assistance program instead of paying WHCA to administer it. Jo said she understood and said the program is geared toward the elderly. Brett noted General Assistance recipients must meet certain criteria. Mrs. Brodie noted that oil companies don't like to deliver less than 100—gallons. Dr. Ashmore said any locally administered program would have to go through town meeting.

Mrs. Veysey asked how the town would find out who needs assistance. Jo said WHCA has the numbers available on how many qualify for LIHEAP. Jo said she just wanted to address the issue, and a discussion followed about the THAW fund.

A brief discussion followed on road and ditching needs. Mrs. Brodie suggested that money allocated to the social service agencies ought to be diverted for oil programs so that the town could take care of their own. It was noted that the social service agencies generally are delivering services to Lamoine residents.

Stu asked about the town meeting date. Selectmen agreed that Election Day would be April 7, 2009 and the open town meeting would be April 8, 2009. There was a brief discussion about the length of terms for Selectmen, and whether the school would start charging for use of the building for town meeting when it becomes part of the RSU.

There was a brief discussion about formally separating the fire station lot from the overall school lot. It was agreed this should be done soon.

The budget committee set its organizational meeting for Monday, October 13, 2008 at 5:00 PM at the town hall.

**Contracts – Town Hall Renovation** – Jo moved to sign the contract as revised with AA Randall & Sons. Richard 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0**

**Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant Tax Collector** – Jo moved to sign a contract with Diane Carter. Richard 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**Oil Pre-Buy** - Mr. Jordan told the Selectmen that the Lamoine Baptist Church had just signed up with Dead River for \$3.13 a gallon. Brett said he would like to put this matter off until next meeting to figure out what the town's options are. He moved to seek informal bids outside of the bids sought by the consortium. Chris 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

**Bloomfield Park Entrance** – Chris said he has sent the easements for both lots to the Branches and to Stu at the Town Office via e-mail, as well as a deed for the missing triangle of land. Richard said the town might be able to use that triangle until someone said "foul". Chris said the Madrell heirs would have the only claim. He said the documents are ready, and there should be no problem getting the signatures, and no one raised any concerns about the triangle. He said once the Branches and Madrell heirs sign the easement for the right-of-way, the Selectmen would sign over the rights the town might have across the Branch property.

Brett asked if the swap was a relatively equal amount of land. Chris said it was. He said the road also serves as access to the snowmobile club lot. Richard said other property owners might have access over that road beyond the town owned area. Brett noted the road to Latona Spring is quickly being encroached by tree growth. He suggested some money be set aside to clear that, as the town clearly has a right of way on that road.

**Veterans Memorial** – Jo said the Veterans' Memorial Committee met last night and offered congratulations on the dedication. Richard said he saw the TV coverage and it looked like it went extremely well. Jo said it did, and credited good planning. Richard

said it seemed to be well attended. He asked about the outstanding balance. Jo said she believed about \$11,000 was left to raise. She said the purpose of last night's meeting was to discuss fundraising ideas and to come up with a calendar. She said they're still waiting for the concrete bill, and they're still selling bricks.

Brett said Bill Fennelly mentioned cashing in bottles dropped off at the transfer station and using the proceeds to buy bricks for people who are unable to. Jo said Stacey Curtis also designates bottles for the fund.

Jo said the Selectmen need to decide on some protection for the Memorial area so people don't back onto the benches. She said the committee talked about metal posts and chains. There was a lengthy discussion about granite posts, curbing, or raised flower beds. Jo noted that Hubene Brodie had offered to supply a different wreath appropriate to different holidays. She said the committee would like to sell DVD's of the ceremony. Stu said he could make a bunch of copies if needed. That was OK with the Selectmen.

Richard asked how the ongoing brick orders are handled. Kathy DeFusco says she bundles up 20-to-25 for Fred Wieninger to make. She said a tool is needed to lift out the blank bricks for the engraved ones. Stu said there is an ant problem in the memorial vicinity.

**Special Town Meeting Order** – Selectmen signed an order for a Special Town Meeting election on December 9, 2008 to fill Chris's seat due to his pending resignation. It was noted that will be the same date as the School Consolidation vote.

**Lamoine Quarterly** – Stu said he'd drafted the front page only thus far. He said he was thinking of doing an entire page with pictures and articles on the Memorial. Selectmen approved. He said the paper should be done by the next meeting.

**Underground Entrance Permit – Berry Cove Road** – Stu reported Greg Gleason had requested permission to run underground electric cable to his home under a small part of the Berry Cove Right of Way. He said he devised a number of conditions, most of which have to do with digging. Brett moved to sign the permit, Richard 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Vote in favor was 4-0.**

Selectmen signed a thank-you card to Eric Marvin who volunteered to take down the flags on display on various utility poles.

Brett suggested it would be fitting to have some sort of tribute to Jay and Perry Fowler for their contributions to the memorial project and the playground. Selectmen agreed that would be an excellent idea

Chris said an e-mail message from Stu to the MDOT was apparently quite effective because they were there the next day to fix Archer's Brook.

Jo outlined the next meeting schedule per the agenda as follows:

- a. October 2008
  - i. October 2, 2008 – Update job descriptions, staffing plans
  - ii. October 16, 2008
- b. November 2008 – Meet on 11/6/08, 11/20/08
- c. December 2008 – Meet on 12/4/08, 12/18/08
- d. January 2009 – Meet on 1/8/09, 1/22/09
- e. February 2009 – Meet on 2/5/09, 2/19/09

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Adm. Asst.

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